[*Note.*—An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.]

II.—NEW PARTY IN THE COUNCIL.

SRI L. SUBBARAMA REDDI :—" May I know whether any new party has been formed in the House? "

MR. PRESIDENT :—" I was just about to mention it. The hon. Member has forestalled me. The House will be interested to know that the following Members have written to me on the following lines :—

' The following Members have constituted themselves as the party known as the United Democrats consisting of—

Dr. V. K. John,
Sri M. D. T. Kumaraswami Mudaliyar,
Abdul Latif Farooki Sahib Bahadur,
Dr. Syed Tajuddin,
Mrs. M. N. Clubwala,
Sri R. Suryanarayana Rao,
Sri B. Narayanaswami Nayudu, and
Sri H. M. Jagannatham.'

" Subsequently Sri D. Manjaya Hegde has joined the party. The party has naturally written to me to make the necessary seating arrangements. This letter was received by me on 25th February. On that very day I had this communication shown to the hon. Member, Mr. Uppi Sahib. On 27th a communication was addressed to him on these lines :—

' The communication received by the Hon. President announcing the formation of the United Democrats Party was shown to you on the 25th February. The Hon. the President wishes to know whether there is any change in the present strength of your party and its position in relation to the newly formed Opposition Party to enable him to decide whether any change in the leadership of the official Opposition is called for. A reply may be sent before 2nd March since any change, if necessary, will have to be given effect to on 3rd March when the Council meets. '

" Till now I have not received any intimation from the hon. Member, Mr. Uppi Sahib, nor is he present in the Council now I wish to know from the Leader of the House or Dr. Subbarayan whether we can proceed to allot seats to the new party."

SRI B. BHIMA RAO :—" May I know whether any communication has been sent individually to hon. Members of the old party? "

MR. PRESIDENT :—" I have ascertained personally from the hon. Members, Dr. Syed Tajuddin Sahib and Mr. Abdul Latif Farooki Sahib that they have joined the new party. Now the Members of the Main Opposition Party are only four :—

Mr. K. Uppi Sahib,
Mr. K. T. M. Ahamed Ibrahim Sahib,
Mr. V. Hameed Sultan Maricair, and
Mr. S. K. Shaik Rowther Sahib."

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DR. V. K. JOHN :—" Some more hon. Members are likely to join the party."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" The only difficulty in my way is the present Leader of the Opposition has not replied to my communication. I am only thinking whether I should wait for some time to get his reply."

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" May I just bring to your notice that it is much better that Mr. Uppi Sahib who is still the Leader of the Opposition is present here. It may be that he may have some difficulty, but he is not present here. We may have to hear what he has to say. It may be that some of the hon. Members who joined him would like to remain independent. I will leave it to you, Sir, to decide. I am saying this simply because the present Leader of the Opposition is not present here and after all there is no urgency. What I learn from my colleague, Dr. Subbarayan, is that the parliamentary practice is that any Member who has the largest following in the Opposition will be considered the Leader of the Opposition." 11-15 a.m.

MR. PRESIDENT :—" Your Hon. Colleague can himself tell the House what the position is."

THE HON. DR. P. SUBBARAYAN :—" I scented the formation of this new party but I thought it rather delicate to speak on this matter, as I am not a Member of this House, though I am entitled to speak on this matter. In the House of Commons it is usually the practice that the Member who has the largest group as his followers is called the Leader of the Opposition. Of course the Leader of the Opposition there is paid and naturally there is competition for it. When General Election took place after the last war all the Liberals went out, and the Labour Members in the Opposition were only 13 in number and still these 13 Members of the Labour Party were the official Opposition. Following that precedent it is the convention and the right of the Leader of the largest party that he should be called the Leader of the Opposition, though no payment is made to him here."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" I have no doubt on that point. I simply wanted to know whether the House felt that it need not wait further but proceed to allocate the seats."

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" Sir, you have given an opportunity to the present Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Uppi Sahib. Probably there were some difficulties for him to send in his reply in time. Before you give your final decision, may I also suggest that individual communications may be sent to other Members to ascertain what their position is."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" I received a communication from the Secretary of the new party. I was not quite satisfied. I wanted to have requisitions from each and every Member of that party. I received a communication signed by all the nine Members saying

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that they had all formed themselves into a new party. Have you got that communication (turning to Mr. H. M. Jagannatham). You took it from me."

MR. H. M. JAGANNATHAM :—" Yes, Sir."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" I have got requisitions signed by nine Members that they have formed themselves into a separate party and that they should be given a separate place. There is no difficulty about that. There are only four Members in the present Opposition and I do not see any necessity for writing to them separately."

THE HON. DR. P. SUBBARAYAN :—" I would point out respectfully, Sir, that you have nothing to do with the party or to ask any Member, in consonance with your dignity, to which party he belongs."

(SOME VOICE : ' Dr. John expects two more defections from that party '.) (Laughter.)

MR. PRESIDENT :—" The only point I was considering was this : This communication was sent to Mr. Uppi Sahib's mufassal address. I do not know whether it has reached him or not."

(A VOICE : ' He is in Delhi '.)

* DR. V. K. JOHN :—" A new party called the United Democratic Party of which I have the honour to be the leader has been formed. I am very much inconvenienced by moving about every time for purposes of consultation with my colleagues. I personally consulted the Leader of the House and I expressed to him that I could not be moving about every time. I wrote to the Leader of the House that the purpose of a Government and the purpose of an Opposition is the same and requested that all the Ministers should be present in the House when the discussion of the Budget is on. I informed that our criticisms would be directed to assist the Government in this important session and that it is also our right as the largest Opposition to be assigned that place which the present Opposition occupies. We are at present nine members. In future we expect it go up to fifteen. But you need not rely on that expectation. Whatever it is, we are nine in number and the other Opposition was a communal Opposition and some of those members thought that it should not function and therefore it broke up. Now there remains only four members in that party and we are nine. As Hon. Dr. Subbarayan said we should be given that place. When you Mr. President have intimated Mr. Uppi Sahib the very moment that we have constituted ourselves into a party, he ought to have said out of courtesy—' We may be given another place and the nine members who have constituted themselves as the largest party are entitled to come to our place.' Instead of doing that he has kept quiet. The budget session is the most important of all sessions in this House and I suggest that sufficient time should be given for Members to discuss the various matters arising out of the budget and the right of the official Opposition

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to it in the place which it is assigned to them must be given effect to by you immediately. We should be given that place to which we are entitled; otherwise we shall be only inconvenienced very much in functioning as the official Opposition."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" I have no doubt on that point. It is a matter which I could have decided myself, but I thought that in an important matter like this the House must feel interested and so I wanted to be guided by the sense of the House. It is in that view that I wanted to take the sense of the House."

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" May I know whether Dr. John is anxious to get into the seat of the Leader of the House? " (Loud laughter.)

MR. PRESIDENT :—" The only point is this : I showed the letter of the present Democratic Party to Mr. Uppi Sahib on the 25th and I did not expect any opinion from him at that time. Afterwards, I thought it would be better if I wrote to him and ask him to reply. That was sent to him on the 27th and we do not know whether it reached him. However we need not wait any further . . ."

DR. V. K. JOHN :—" We will wait till to-morrow."

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" I had a communication from Dr. John announcing to me that a party had been formed. He insisted that the Opposition should have the privilege of all the Ministers being present here during the debate. Even without your (Mr. President) sanction I had the information communicated to the Leader of the Opposition, and I am obliged to the Hon. Ministers who are present here."

(SOME VOICE : ' After all it is a mere change of place that Mr. John is asking for. ')

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" Even without official recognition I was helping hon. Dr. John."

DR. V. K. JOHN :—" Thank you very much."

(At this stage the President said that discussion on the Budget might be resumed.)

III.—GENERAL DISCUSSION ON THE BUDGET FOR 1948–49—*cont.*

* SRI K. VENKATASWAMI NAYUDU :—" Mr. President, Sir, the budget that has been placed before us is a very important budget, because of two points. First of all, it has not given us any additional taxation and we are asked to go on with the monies we have got; and secondly, it is what I may call a constructive programme budget, because more prominence is given to nation-building activities such as Village Uplift and Harijan Welfare. We feel that this year Government propose to do a lot of repair work which has hitherto never been undertaken. We are also feeling that there are items in the budget which go to show that we are returning to our normal condition in the country.